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Research Synopsis

Submit to the Faculty of Social Sciences,
University Department of Political Science,
(L. N. Mithila University, Darbhanga)

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University Department of Political Science
Mithila University, Darbha.

Title -

Postmodern Prespectives on Democracy in India
(A study of Political Process since 2014)

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Research Proposal

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH

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INTRODUCTION

"Time is no longer a river, but a collection of ponds and pools"

-(Zygmunt Bauman)

Postmodernism, questions "Grand Narratives". These stories , called metanarratives,were considered absolute and unquetionable and has a big impact on how we think about various aspects of life like politics , history and culture. Instead of favouring one universal view, postmodernism values diversity in human experiences, culture, and Identities. It criticizes the idea of having one fixed way of doing things or thinking about democracy. According to the postmodern perspective, democracy is an ongoing process, and there isn't a single perfect model. This way of thinking has important implications, especially when studying societies that were once colonized. Lyotard, in his book "The Postmodern Condition" writes about being skeptical or not believing easily in big , all narrated stories thar were used to justify political ideas.

Dialectics between Postmodernism and politics –

Postmodernism has made a big impact on how we look at literature and International relations. One important part of it is being skeptical, and this skepticism can help question and stop unfair political and social actions. Postmodernism also shows us the hidden values and assumptions behind political thinking. It gives us a way to critically think about these ideas, not just for scholars but also for groups that might not have a lot of power in society.

Traditional political science ideas are being questioned by postmodernism, which makes people look at politics more critically. Postmodern critique focuses on what is left out or ignored in politics, like the voices of women and ethnic minorities. It encourages giving space to these neglected perspectives, making it a strong tool for studying politics.

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The ongoing conflict between different stories and big ideas, as well as the celebration of differences, is different from the usual, long-term politics of a nation. Identity politics, where different groups express their unique identities, is an example of this change. Postmodernism and democracy together can replace the idea of one absolute power with a more diverse and varied voice from different members of society. Postmodern skepticism about universal truths has paved the way for democracy that is specific to each country, local, and enriched by its unique socio-cultural aspects and stories.

Postmodern lens and Politics in India -

Understanding democracy worldwide often relies on a set and widely accepted definition, but looking at democracy in many other parts of the world today requires a fresh perspective. The journey of Indian democracy has been studied by various scholars using different approaches and viewpoints. They've tried to make sense of Indian democracy and the concept of India. However, the political, economic, social, and cultural aspects of Indian democracy still leave room for various possibilities. Research on democracy in India usually focuses on big explanations involving the transition and consolidation of democratic values, emphasizing the roles of institutions and elites.

When it comes to India, it's essential to look at how democracy has become deeply rooted in society, shaping new social relationships and values that, in turn, fuel popular politics. The Nationalism , rather than democracy , seemed to be a more primary political passion. The nation seemed to cast a shadow over the democracy . The experience of democracy in India has opened up numerous points of dissent , new conflicts of values and identities , a permanent antagonism of meaning and interest that leaves its citizens often with an overwhelmong sense that Indian society is flying off in many different directions at once and the unity of all reference points seems to vanish. the postmodern prespectives have opened the gateway for dialogue among diverse knowledge hold by diverse Indian society beyond the monistic view of Knowledge and Politics.

The dominating theme in indian elections are being metanarrative encompassing every local or small things in its vicinity. These metanarratives are dominating in indian elections and conflict between party system expanding beyond the electrol politics

It's crucial to see the democratic process in India as an ongoing journey without a fixed starting point, route, or destination. This research will use the perspective of postmodernism to analyze significant developments in Indian politics since 2014

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STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

As a Nation- state India has grown in strength and asserted itself as a metarnarrative and overcome the little narratives of regionalism and , differences but there is advent of new development such as Ethno-National conflict , Identity politics , demand for more Regional Autonomy, Centre- State rift, Rise of One party system , Rise of caste based small parties , Cultural politics of Social groups , evolution of new Social Movements and voices from margin are taking stage in centre. This research proposal argues that these developments are in the respect of postmodern concept of "Metanarrative vs Little Narratives" and hence demand a fresh analysis, explanation and understanding of the ever unfolding political process of India . This Resarch proposal will try to engage and find the answer to the following research questions :

- What are the important insights of postmodernism ? Are these insights helpful in Democratic politics ?
- Is the Indian politics is unfolding with the specifications of postmodern politics making us understand the process in a better way ?
- How does the postmodern perspectives intersect issues of caste – class based Identity politics of Indian democracy ?
- Is technological development in political communication problematic in post modern lenses ?
- Does Postmodernism offer insights for development ?

Literarture Review

Books

Butler, C (2002) "Postmodernism: A Very Short Introduction". This book provides a concise yet comprehensive overview of the complex and multifaceted movement of postmodernism. The author skillfully navigates through the historical development of postmodernism, tracing its roots in literature, philosophy, and art. Butler effectively captures the movement's interdisciplinary nature, illustrating how

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postmodernism transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries. This intertextual approach is evident as he explores key figures such as Derrida, Foucault, and Lyotard, whose ideas have profoundly influenced postmodern thought this serves as an excellent entry point for us to a concise and accessible understanding of postmodernism. It effectively navigates the historical, philosophical, and cultural dimensions of the movement, making it an invaluable resource.

Derrida, J. (2013) "Of Grammatology" This book is originally published in 1967 in french. This corrected edition is the translation by Gayatri Spivak which inherit the richness complexity of the original. "of Grammatology" is widely acknowledged as a seminal work in deconstructivist criticism. Derrida challenges the prevailing view within the western philosophical tradition that considers writing merely as a derivative of speech – a perceived "fall" from the complete presence of speech. Throughout the book he deconstructs this perspective , unravelling its manifestation in the writings of classical modern thinkers. Derrida advocates for a 'new science' of 'grammatology' that would approach these issues in a fresh manner.

Doshi, S. L. (2008), "Postmodern Perspectives on Indian Society". In this book, the author employs a postmodern lens to analyze the dynamic shifts in contemporary Indian society. Through this approach, he reevaluates concepts such as family, caste, village,culture and religion. Taking a sociological stand point , the book critically examines fundamentalism. The author boldy asserts that India society can be characterized as a postmodern society.

Hutcheon , Linda's (2003) "The Politics of Postmodernism" this timeless text remains a remarkably clear and insightful exploration of postmodernism, providing a compelling insight into its significance. This work not only offers a nuanced examination of the concept but also delves into why postmodernism holds such relevance.

Jameson, F. (2013) Jameson defines postmodernism as the cultural framework inherent in a globalized financially driven stage of capitalist society. According to writer , postmodernism is marked by a "crisis of historicity", a diminished emotional impact, and the prevalence of pastiche. He traces these postmodern characteristics across various domains such as film, television, literature, economic, architecture, and philosophy. Jameson contends that postmodernism , fueled by mass culture and capitalism, permeates all facets of our daily existence.

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K. Brants, K. Voltmer (2011) the ethical commitment to democracy necessitates the establishment of public sphere conducive to rational discourse among the populace, considering real alternatives. This article posits that the Internet falls short on two fronts in fulfilling this task. Drawing inspiration from the insights of Jean Baudrillard, it contends that the Internet perpetuates a structure of passive political agents due to its one- way model of communication. Rather then fostering enagagement in a dialogue about collective decision – making, the Internet is primarily designed to deliver political content.

Katz, A. (2018) katz's work engages in a critique of cultural studies, advocating for the adoption of posrmodernist critical theory's analytical tols to address societal issues more effectively. The book seems to encourage a broader, more inclusive approach to understanding and addressing the complexities of social and political dynamics.

Kelly, M. G. E. (2014) This book provides a lucid and critical examination of Michel Foucault's political thought, offering insights into what he articulated , how his ideas have been applied , and their contemporary influence. It delves into the practical applications of his work for contemporary politics . As one of the foremost theorists in the humanities and social science, Foucault's radical perspectives have challenged conventional understanding of society.

Lyotard, Jean-François's "The Postmodern Condition" explores the shift in societal structures and ways of understanding knowledge. Lyotard contends that grand narratives, or overarching explanations of history and progress, have lost their credibility in the postmodern era. He critiques metanarratives, suggesting that they no longer effectively explain the complexities of contemporary society.Lyotard emphasizes the importance of language games, where knowledge is dispersed in a variety of forms and contexts. He argues that society has transitioned from valuing a single, universal truth to embracing a plurality of diverse narratives. This fragmentation challenges traditional notions of authority and expertise.Furthermore, Lyotard delves into the impact of technology on knowledge. He discusses how information technologies contribute to the dissemination of knowledge but also raise questions about control, privacy, and power. The shift to a postmodern condition is marked by a skepticism towards overarching truths and an acknowledgment of the diversity of perspectives.Critics argue that Lyotard's rejection of grand narratives may lead to relativism and a lack of shared values. However, his work has been

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influential in shaping discussions on postmodernism, highlighting the evolving nature of knowledge in contemporary societies.. He argues that society has transitioned from valuing a single, universal truth to embracing a plurality of diverse narratives. This fragmentation challenges traditional notions of authority and expertise.Furthermore, Lyotard delves into the impact of technology on knowledge. He discusses how information technologies contribute to the dissemination of knowledge but also raise questions about control, privacy, and power. The shift to a postmodern condition is marked by a skepticism towards overarching truths and an acknowledgment of the diversity of perspectives.Critics argue that Lyotard's rejection of grand narratives may lead to relativism and a lack of shared values. However, his work has been influential in shaping discussions on postmodernism, highlighting the evolving nature of knowledge in contemporary societies.

Powell, J's (2007) Postmodernism For Beginners in his perspective , writer contend that Postmodernism functions as set of "maps" designed to navigate individuals through the complexities of a shifting world. This book delves into the insights of influential figures such as foucault , who expunds on power and knowledge, Jameson, who explores mapping in the postmodern context, baudrillard, who analyzes the role of media , Harvey, who discusses time-space compression , Derrida , Known for deconstruction , and Deleuze and Guattari, who elaborate on the concept of rhizomes.

Pangle, T. L. (1993) The Ennobling of Democracy: The Challenge of the Postmodern Age the work presents a meticulous critique of postmodernism and explores its profound implications for both political life and thought .Pangle delves into the ideas of prominent such as Lyotard, Vattimo, and Rorty, scrutinizing their political dimensions.

Sim, Stuart (2012) The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism this companion to postmodernism serves as an excellent gateway to understanding postmodernit thought . With contributions from a diverse group of international scholars, the book offers 19in – depth essays covering major themes and topics. The revised edition has also been enriched with fresh topics, ranging from hypermedia to global warming.

Taylor, D. (2014) Michel Foucault: Key Concepts this book delves into the core ideas that define Foucault's intellectual contricutions, covering concepts such as dissiplinary power, biopower, bodies, spirituality, and practices of the self. Each

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essay within the book manifestions throughout Foucault's body of work . The exploration also highlights the interconnectedness of these concepts and underscores their potential applications.

White, S. K. (1991) Political theory and postmodernism the writer navigates the complexities of the postmodern dilemma by delineating two distinct approaches to understan the concept of responsibility. These perspectives , one rooted in modern thought and the other in postmodern ideologies. White delves into the work of key thinkers such as Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard and Hebarmas. The overreaching objectives is to demonstrate how postmodernism can enrich contemporary ethical political reflections.

Jaffrelot, C. (2023) Modi's India: Hindu Nationalism and the Rise of Ethnic Democracy In the realm of Indian politics, Hindu Nationalism has become entwined with a variant of national-populism, proving to be a formidable force at the polls. Jaffrelot elucidates how current politics has steered India towards a novel form of democracy, characterized as an ethnic- democracy. In the context of these developments, the postmodern concept of metanarrative comes into play. The narrative propagated by Hindu nationalism and national – populism can be seen as constructing a metanarrative that reinforces a particular vision of the Indian nation.

Kaviraj, S. (2011) The Enchantment of Democracy and India In this compilation , the essays undertake a multifaceted exploration of indian democracy , adopting diverse perspectives .From a postmodern standpoint , kaviraj underscores the inadequacy of conventional political theory in comprehending indian democracy, which appears enigmatic when assessed through traditional preconditions for successful democratic governance. This includes prerequisites such as a robust bureaucratic state, capitalist production , industrialization , societal secularization , and relative economic prosperity. The enduring nature of indian democracy prompts a reevaluation , questioning whether these convetional preconditions are , in fact,indispensable for the substenance of democracy. The essays delve into captivating facets of democracy's interplay with religion , identity, development, inequality, and culture.

Mehta, P. B. (2017). The Burden of Democracy. The author states the point that Nationalism , rather than democracy , seemed to be a more primary political passion. The nation seemed to cast a shadow over the democracy . The experience of democracy in India has opened up numerous points of dissent , new conflicts of

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values and identities , a permanent antagonism of meaning and interest that leaves its citizens often with an overwhelmong sense that Indian society is flying off in many different directions at once and the unity of all reference points seems to vanish.

Thakur , ManindraNath.(2022) Gyaan ki Rajneeti this book urges readers to discard the simplistic communal- secular binary and instead encourages them to explore the nuanced ways in which the politics of knowledge unfolds. The Author writes the postmodern prespectives have opened the gateway for dialogue among diverse knowledge hold by diverse Indian society beyond the monistic view of knowledge and politics.

Yadav, Y. (2020) Making Sense of Indian Democracy: Theory in Practice In his book a compilation of essays author states that the political logic of Indian democracy, the economic logic of a neo- liberal state, the social logic of a caste system under transformation, and the culture logic of India's own modernity still left open several possibilities. Students of Indian democracy need a fresh pair of glasses.We need to see the democratic enterprise in India as an open-ended journey with no predetermined starting point, fixed route, and given destination.

Articles

Ghasemi, M. (2019) the article argues that postmodernism stands as a pivotal juncture in the evolution of human thought, challenging fundaental assumptions across social , political, historical, culture and literary domains, Its impact extends to the realm of democracy , prompting a reevalution of established norms. This essay endeavors to explore the ways in which postmodernism has influenced political, socail, and literary democracies.

Dongare, Animesh(2021) in his article argues that dominating theme in indian elections are being metanarrative encompassing every local or small things in its vicinity. These metanarratives are dominating in indian elections and conflict between party system expanding beyond the electrol politics.

Tripathi, Jyotirmaya (2007) this article forwads ths point that in thre time of homogenizing globalistaion process and market economy the nation – state of india has grown in strength and this has challenged the little narratives of regionalism and dissent.

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Seethi, K. M. (2001) the article argues that the alternative model of development in the era of neo-liberalism like the growing intervention of civil society or "local" paradigms can be the new trap of neo-liberalism . the postmodernism must be checked before applying it for alternatives.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

- The potency of postmodern approach as a political methodology would be investigated.
- Asses the implication of postmodern skepticism towards metanarrative on democratic legitimacy.
- Evaluate the extent to which democratic system can effectively accommodate diverse cultural identities
- Investigate the impact of identity-based movements in power structures and respresentation in democracies.

- To critical examine the role of technological advancement and its influence on manufacturing public opinion in democracy.
- To look forward an alternative approach to Development in postmodernism

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RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- Postmodernism offers a more inclusive, collective, and comprehensive framework to liberal democracy.
- The developement of National integration and Identities in the politics of India has led to more fragmented and diverse political landscape .
- Nation-State in India is always asserted itself as metanarrative to counter the cultural diversity.
- De-centaralization of political communication through technological means has fundamentally transformed the landscape of political discourse.
- Postmodern offers alternative prespectives on development with special reference to regional imbalance.

Research coverage and scope – This reseach will cover the academic discourse around the Indian politics since 2014. This will include a depth analysis of literature review and analyze scholarly discussions on policy shifts, governance models, and changes in the political landscape during this period .

Research Method – The research will use historical-analytical method , descriptive and analysis of secondary sources. This approach involves an in-depth examination of existing literature, documents, and other relevant materials to gather insights and perspectives on the topic . By utilizing qualitative methods, the study aims to explore and interpret the complex nuances, patterns, and meanings embedded in the existing body of knowledge. This approach will facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, allowing for a rich and contextually informed analysis.

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WORK PLAN : TENTATIVE CHAPTERISATION

- Chapter I Introduction
- Chapter II Postmodern prespective and Political Process India.
- Chapter III Democratic Resurgence and Regional Political Parties.
- Chapter IV Identity Politics of and Power Structure.
- Chapter V Postmodernism and Paradigmatic shifts in Development .
- Chapter VI Tradition, Technology and Postmodernism.
- Chapter VII Conclusion and Suggestions for further research.

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